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# Tech Times

Technology Tidbits From Your Help Desk Staff

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Agricultural Research Service  
Administrative and  
Financial Management  
Information Technology Division

## New Faces on the Help Desk

Ivan Scott joined the ARS Help Desk team at GWCC on April 23. Ivan comes to us from Andrews Air Force Base, where he supported about 200 customers as a member of their help desk. Prior to that, he was a junior computer analyst for a Pentagon contractor. Before joining the Pentagon, he had over 20 years of customer service experience in the Army. Ivan has a Bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems from Strayer University. His customer service and troubleshooting skills, eagerness to learn, and attention to detail make him a valuable addition to our team.

Jim Neal joined CSB as a Quality Assurance Specialist on 7 May. Jim was previously assigned to the Senior Software Staff at the Defense Contract Management Agency, in Baltimore performing Software Quality Assurance. He has held Software Quality and programming positions in the private sector at Sperry Corporation and the American Automobile Association. Mr. Neal is married with two children; Jennifer, 26 years old and James, 28, with one granddaughter, Taylor and one due in July.

Angela Pompey has joined CSB as our third LAN Administrator, joining Carl Woody and Ken Ammar in that role. Angela comes to us from the Consumer Product Safety Commission, where she has worked for the past 2 ½ years as Network Administrator/Help Desk Supervisor/Asst. Web Master/Training Coordinator. Before that, she worked at the National Center for Health Statistics for 5 ½ years as a Help Desk Technician/Team Leader/Training Coordinator. We are very glad to have Angela on board!

Sophia Tucker began working on the ARS Help Desk in Washington, DC in May. Sophia is detailed from the PPD Property Group to Keith Ware's position during Keith's 60-day detail to the TSSB position vacated by Kirby Sutton.

The ARS Help Desk also welcomes our returning summer interns, who are back for their second year. Denisse Paz, a junior at James Madison University will be returning to the DC Help Desk. Stephen Griffith, who has recently graduated from Atholton High School will be joining our GWCC team.

New interns to the Customer Support Branch this year are Alvin Gibson and Claudia Sanchez. Alvin has joined the Customer Support Branch at GWCC and is working with the LAN team and the Help Desk. Alvin is completing his studies to gain a two-year certificate in Computer Networking at Prince George's Community College. Claudia is working as a member of the team in the DC offices. She has just completed her sophomore year at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA where she is majoring in Psychology.

All of our interns will have the opportunity to get a good exposure to the type of work that we do on the help desk. They will be filling various roles; installing software on customer PC's; setting up PC's and printers; downloading and installing drivers; and providing training tips and answering questions for our customers on using our standard applications.

We are all very excited to have them join us and hope that their experiences in AFM will be as enjoyable and rewarding for them as it is for us.

## Using your own Sound Effects in PowerPoint



If you have a .WAV file available on your computer, you can use it as an animation sound effect in PowerPoint. To do this, first launch PowerPoint and open an existing presentation that contains animation. Next, navigate to a slide that has several animated objects and choose **Slide Show | Custom Animation** to open the Custom Animation dialog box. You can also right-click, and select **Custom Animation** from the resulting shortcut menu. At this point, click on the **Effects** tab and select **Other Sound** from the **Animation And Sound** dropdown list. In the **Add Sound** dialog box, locate a .WAV file and click OK to return to the **Custom Animation** dialog box. If you need to change any animation effects in the **Custom Animation** dialog box, do so at this time. If you're satisfied with your changes, click OK. To test your sound effect, choose **Slide Show | View Show** or click the Slide Show view button to launch your presentation. Next, cycle through your slide animations. When you reach the object that you applied a sound effect to, the sound will play.

This software tip is provided by ElementK Journals. ElementK Journals publishes and delivers FREE TIPS every week on over 25 different software titles! Go to <http://www.elementktips.com> to sign up for these weekly emails.

## ElementK Testimonial

Hi, my name is Kirk Webber, and I'm the Branch Chief for the Customer Support Branch in ITD. We're responsible for your Help Desk, LAN, and ElementK administration. I wanted to share my experience with ElementK with you, and encourage you to use this very valuable resource to improve both your own skills and how you and your co-workers do business.

There are courses in "techie" skills, like Cisco routers and NetWare, as well as training in desktop software, like the software in our Microsoft Office 2000 suite, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access. You may think that software training is all that ElementK has. But that's far from the truth.

Over the past year, I have taken advantage of ElementK to try to make myself a better leader and manager. There are a lot of business courses, like courses on how to manage your time, how to lead a team, and how to motivate a group of people. There are courses on project management and running effective meetings. Some of these courses are written by the Harvard Business School, which is a very well-known and respected institution.

Some of the courses even have templates, planning tools, and forms that you can print and use within your own team right away.

**ElementK**  
ElementK

Questions, comments and suggestions are encouraged. This newsletter is for you and we want to provide the information you need. Please contact the Help Desk with any comments or recommendations you have.

## STAR

The new System for Time and Attendance Reporting (STAR) is being implemented as the standard time and attendance software for REE (CSREES, ERS and ARS). This software replaces the DOS-based, PC-TARE program currently being used to prepare time and attendance.

STAR implementation started in January with the North Atlantic Area. AFM has completed its implementation. Pacific West Area and Mid South Area have begun implementation in their Areas. Implementation will be complete in all Areas by February, 2002.

## Did You Know??



Headquarters has 541 GroupWise mailboxes. Below are some statistics about our GroupWise mailboxes.

Total mail items: 868,214  
Items in Trash: 42,580

145 mailboxes have more than 1000 items in either the Inbox, Outbox or Trash. The largest mailbox has **over 8500 messages** total!

Total space consumed by GroupWise messages and attachments: 12.7 Gigabytes (equivalent of approximately 2.5 million pages of Word documents)

## GroupWise Training Schedule

### Managing and Using Archives

For those new to archiving, this is a "must-have" class to prepare for the Clean-up! If you've never attended one of our classes, now is the time to start!

Portals - July 16, 1pm  
GWCC - July 24, 1pm

## PC won't turn off?

Have you had trouble turning your PC off using the power button? Try pushing the power button and holding it in for at least 10 seconds.



## Securing Your NFC ID and Password

Since NFC ID's are individually assigned, it is your responsibility to safeguard your ID at all times.

Passwords should be unique, but meaningful to you. Memorize your ID and password combination. Passwords should NEVER be left in written form in any way so that an unauthorized individual could use it to gain access to NFC.

### Passwords

A password is a set of 6 to 8 characters used to authenticate a Logon ID. Pass-

words EXPIRE every 35 days at which time a new password must be selected. If your current password has expired, meaning you have not changed it within the 35 day time period, NFC will warn you that your password has expired. You will then be allowed to specify a new password.

### Important Items to Remember When Entering Your Password

- Select a password that is meaningful to yourself and at least 6 to 8 characters long. For example: My Baby Is A Wonderful Daughter - password is MBIAWD.
- NFC maintains a list of commonly used passwords and these passwords are invalid. If you attempt to use an invalid password your ID will be suspended. Some examples of these are: a name, initials, a combination of month and year, a place, a city, social security number, or any other personal data. Their use could provide an opportunity for a "hacker" to gain unauthorized access to NFC and your data.
- NFC allows 3 attempts to correctly enter your password, after the third at-

tempt, your ID is suspended.

- You may attempt to change your password only once within a 24-hour time period. If you attempt to change your password more than once, NFC will reject the newly specified password as invalid. Repeated attempts to enter your new password will result in the suspension of your ID.
- NFC maintains a historical file of passwords associated with your ID and these passwords are invalid for future use, so your ID will be suspended if you attempt to use a set of passwords in a rotating manner.

### ID Security

It is your responsibility to maintain the integrity of your ID and password. Never share an ID with a coworker, since this increases the risks and reduces accountability. If you forget your password, or feel that your password or ID has been compromised in any way, please call your local Help Desk GWCC 301-504-1074 or DC 202-720-3908.

## GroupWise News - GroupWise Clean-up Policy

The first step in beginning the GroupWise clean-up policy has been completed. Over the course of several weeks, the Help Desk visited each desktop to check that everyone had an archive in place and that it was functioning correctly.

**Although the cleanup policy is not yet in effect**, now is the time to start archiving messages that you would like to keep for future reference. Keep in mind messages that are 60 days old that are not archived by you will be permanently removed from the system. It is your responsibility to manage your mailbox by archiving messages you would like to keep. If you decide not to archive messages, these messages will be lost.

Placing messages in folders is not archiving. This is a very common misconception. You still need to highlight the mail message and select **Actions | Archive** to properly archive a message. This action moves the message out of the "live" GroupWise system and into your own, private archive, out of reach of the maintenance utilities that purge outdated messages.



In the near future, the Help Desk will be sending out announcements to notify you when the clean-up policies will begin. Keep an eye out for these announcements and "Happy Archiving!"

Here are some tips to help you familiarize yourself with your archive:

**To open your archive file:**  
select **File | Open Archive**

**To return to your mailbox:**  
select **File | Open Archive** (It will return you to your normal mailbox)

**How do you know if you're in your archive?**

On the top left hand corner of your GroupWise screen, you will see "(Archive - GroupWise - Mailbox)"

**What is an archive?**

The archive is a place to store messages needed for future reference, separately from our online GroupWise system. Your archive can be stored on the hard drive of

your computer or on a LAN directory such as your H:\ drive. If you store your archive on your H:\ drive, it will be backed up nightly. An archive stored on your computer's hard drive would **not** be backed up.

**Can I still forward messages from my archive directory?**

No, the message must be un-archived first. To un-archive a message simply click on the message you would like to un-archive and select **Actions | Archive**. Under the Actions menu there is a ✓ beside Archive which means the message is Archived. Remove the ✓ by clicking on Archive. The message will be removed from your Archive and placed in your regular mailbox to use as you normally would. Then, when finished with the message select **Actions | Archive** to archive your message again.

**Will my appointments, notes, and tasks be deleted from the creation date or the scheduled date?**

Mail messages are not the only items that will be deleted. Appointments, notes, and tasks will be deleted if they are not archived. Appointments, notes and tasks will be deleted 180 days from scheduled date not the creation date.

# GroupWise Tips and Tricks



## Questions & Answers

**Question:** "I want to create a standard e-mail that I can save and reuse within GroupWise. I want to be able to send this standard e-mail to different people. I want the ability to send it independently. I also need to create a second e-mail that will allow me to modify the body of text and send it to different people. I don't need to modify the entire text but some part of the text."

**Answer:** Create an e-mail, send it to yourself, and when you want to re-use it, select RESEND and change the addressee list.

Also you can send the message to yourself, and save as a view. Double clicking on it will bring it up again.

Save the message as a Draft, and send it whenever you want. To create a draft, do this:

1. Click File, Save Draft.
2. Click the folder you want to save the item in (we recommend the Work in Progress folder), then click OK.

To open and send a draft,

1. In the Folder List, click Work in Progress.
2. Double-click the item.
3. Finish your message, then click Send.

You have all kinds of control over your drafts until you click Send. You can take them out and admire them (click View, Draft Items to see all the drafts in your folder), you can work on them little by little and return them to the Work in Progress folder each time, you can write four or five versions and see which one you like best, and/or you can even scrap them and start fresh.

Just remember, once you click Send you move out of the draft stage, and the message will appear with your other sent items rather than in the Work in Progress folder.



## Vacation Rules

Ahhhh, summertime! The time of year to take the opportunity to change latitude and attitude with the annual summer getaway to the beach, the mountains or wherever your travels may lead. Unfortunately, your e-mail still piles up while you're out and about.

By using a GroupWise vacation rule, you can set your mailbox to manage itself, automatically sending out replies to those who send e-mail while you are away, alerting them that you are out of the office and providing them with an alternative contact if necessary. To set up a rule the next time you are on vacation or out of the office for an extended period, just follow these directions:

1. Click **Tools, Rules, New**. Type a name for the rule, something like "Useful, Re-Usable Vacation Rule."
2. Make sure that under **When Event Is**, **New Item** is selected, and **Received** is selected.
3. Under **Item Types**, select the item types you care about. If you don't want your auto-reply to go out to appointment setters, don't select appointments. Hey, it's your rule.
4. Click **Define Conditions**. Here's the tricky part. This is where the meat of the rule lives.
  1. In the first pop-up menu, click **All Fields**, then find and click **Delivered**. (As opposed to Stand and (click) Delivered.)
  2. In the next pop-up menu, select **On or After Date**, then in the next box, replace the date that appears (probably today's date, which is just GroupWise trying to be helpful) with the date you're leaving for Fiji.

1. In the last pop-up menu, click **And** to start another row, 'cuz we're not done yet.

2. This row will be a lot like the first one, but will define the **end** of your vacation. In the first pop-up menu, click **Delivered**, which should now exist in the pop-up without you're having to go find it.

3. In the next pop-up, click **On or Before Date**, then in then next box, replace the date with the day you're returning

from Fiji. See, now you've defined the period of your vacation, so that even if you forget to disable this rule when you get back, GroupWise will stop messing with your mail. You can change these dates any time to re-use the rule.

4. In the last pop-up menu of the second row, click **And** to start yet another row.

5. In the new row (the third row), click **To** in the first pop-up menu, leave **Contains** in the second, then type your *last name only* in the next box. This ensures that only e-mail sent directly to you, unlike e-mail sent to you by way of list servers and whatnot, will be affected by the rule. And now, in the last pop-up menu, once again, click **And** to start one last row.

6. In the first pop-up menu, click **From**, click **Does Not Contain** in the second menu, and in the third box, again, type your *last name only*. This ensures that you won't get caught in some insane loop with yourself. That would suck. Leave **End** in the last pop-up menu of this last row.

7. Go down to **Then Actions Are**, and click **Add Action, Reply**. Make sure **Reply to Sender** is selected, **do not select "reply to all"** then click **OK**.

8. Type your "I'm in Fiji and you're not" message, then click **OK**.

9. Click **Save**, then **Close**. That's it, you're done.

Here's the cool part. This rule works only during the dates specified in the rule itself. Activate it, then forget about it until you go on vacation again. When you're ready, type new dates in the conditions rows, and in the auto-reply, instead of Fiji, type Rio.

Find other tips like this at the GroupWise "Cool Solutions" website at <http://www.novell.com/cool solutions/gwmag/index.html>

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